



## **NEWS**

### **Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas** **L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2<sup>nd</sup> District**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS FOR REPORT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE COUNTY IS MEETING ITS MINORITY BUSINESSES CONTRACTING GOALS**

**LOS ANGELES** – The Board of Supervisors today approved Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' request for a report to determine whether the county has achieved its goal that 25 percent of participants in contracting and purchasing programs are minority, women, disabled veterans, and disadvantaged-owned businesses.

The report, which the Supervisor said is essentially an audit of County contracting, will include a breakdown by each department, an evaluation of whether the contracting goal could be increased and consideration of whether achieving these goals should be included in annual managerial performance reviews.

The report also will include a recommendation on whether to establish a separate commission dedicated to promoting Community Based Enterprises (CBE), whether to create a director position to coordinate and develop these programs, and to assist County departments in meeting goals established by the Board.

"The intent of the motion is principally to call for an update of what it is that has been done and what then might be improved, consistent with maximizing the role that community based enterprises can play throughout the County of Los Angeles," the Supervisor said.

The motion, he said, includes “a due diligence process that would be inclusive of existing entities ... and measure their effectiveness as objectively as is deemed reasonable.”

The Supervisor directed the County’s Chief Executive Officer to work with the Directors of the County’s Internal Services Department, Office of Affirmative Action and Compliance and County Counsel to return in 60 days with a report on the matter.

The motion also calls for County officials to identify obstacles to CBE participation in county contracting, including credit issues, bonding and county bidding procedures, and include recommendations to resolve these obstacles. It comes at a time when the County is receiving million federal stimulus funding.

“During challenging economic times, government at all levels has an obligation to develop multiple programs to promote economic recovery, including providing appropriate assistance to businesses and employees,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas stated in his motion to the Board.

On a national level, much focus has been placed on assisting large companies and financial institutions with economic recovery. But the Supervisor noted that small businesses, particularly those that are disadvantaged, are often the mainstay of local communities that are not extended the same levels of assistance.

The County has established a 25% goal for CBE participation in its contracting and purchasing programs for certified minority, women, disabled veteran, and disadvantaged-owned businesses.

“The success of local businesses benefits the County in many ways, through increased tax base and employment rolls, reinvestment in the local economy, and stabilization of communities,” the Supervisor said. “County policies should be reexamined, evaluated, and revised if necessary.”

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